

WIVES AND MOTHERS OF CUBAN PRISONERS BROOD, LAUGH, CHATTER, WAIT IN MIAMI

By Charles Portis
Of The Herald Tribune Staff

MIAMI, Fla.

The wives and mothers of the Cuban invasion prisoners had their yellow dresses on yesterday and they could hardly bear the waiting.

They sulked and laughed and chattered on the telephone among themselves to kill time, as they have been doing since Saturday, expecting any minute to hear the good word from Havana.

That word being that James B. Donovan had completed the barter deal with Premier Castro and that the prisoners were on their way to Miami.

The yellow is considered a badge of honor, in defiant response to Castro's having the prisoners dressed in yellow, "the color of worms."

"I'm going out of my mind all week," said Mrs. Carlos Rosello, a pretty 31-year-old mother, whose husband is among the 1,113 prisoners captured in the Bay of Pigs invasion. "It's maybe a good thing they don't tell us anything because we Cubans like to talk. When one of us learns something, everyone knows in a few minutes. Mr. Donovan, he is not a talker."

The Cuban Crippled

Mr. Donovan is not a talker in this situation for good reason, observers believe, because he does not want to endanger the negotiations by leaking anything that might nettle temperamental Castro.

The central gathering place for those who are waiting is a small blue stucco house at 1714 Biscayne Blvd., the headquarters for the Cuban Families Committee.

Mrs. Rosello and about a hundred others were there yesterday, about half of them women in yellow. Most of the others were crippled young men, some with limbs missing. They were among the 62 sickly and badly injured prisoners released last April by Castro.

Jose Fernandez, 33, sat leaning back in a chair with his stiff left leg propped up on a table. He played a .50 caliber machine gun on a small boat that was sunk by shell fire in the invasion of April, 1961. He came ashore uninjured and fought for three days before his leg was

shattered by bullets and he was captured.

His best friend, with whom he trained in N. Caragua, is still a prisoner. Mr. Fernandez owned a small hotel in Key West before the troubles. He lost that while he was a prisoner and now he does nothing except sit around at headquarters and talk with the other men. He cannot get a job. He has a wife and two children and they get by on welfare money.

Did they think at the time the invasion would succeed? "We were positive," he said. All day they sit there in their dark glasses and drink Cokes and talk about going back. Mr. Fernandez and the others

Sometimes they make jokes about it, realizing that it's just talk.

Mrs. Rosello and her family are luckier. Her husband was a prosperous oil distributor in Havana before the revolution. Both her parents and her husband's parents were well-to-do property owners (apartment buildings, stores) near Santiago, and they got out of Cuba with enough money to make a down payment on a new home here. They all live together in it, grandparents, sons and daughters, grandchildren.

When they left Cuba, Mr. and Mrs. Rosello went to Reno, Nev., where Mr. Rosello got a job dealing blackjack in

a gambling house. He knew nothing about dealing cards, but a brother-in-law, a former dealer in Havana, taught him and got him the job. Mr. Rosello spoke good English, having gone to Georgetown Prep School in Washington.

The job paid well, but in March, 1961, he decided he had to join the invasion force. He and Mrs. Rosello and their two daughters loaded a U-Haul trailer and drove to Miami in seven days.

Upon arriving here and signing up, he was sent to 10 days of training there before the invasion. He was captured a few days later.

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